

# Bush visits I MEF

Story compiled by CPAO

MCB Camp Pendleton and MCAS Miramar

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. — President George W. Bush stood before thousands of Camp Pendleton Marines, thanking them for their efforts in Iraq and declaring terrorists won't be able to control Iraq's destiny.

Bush landed at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar early Tuesday, where he spent approximately one hour before flying to Camp Pendleton on Marine One, the president's official helicopter.

While at the air station, Bush presented the President's Volunteer Service Award to Kathryn Ostapuk, wife of Cpl. John Sylvester with the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, for volunteering hundreds of hours to operate an Internet site designed to help families of deployed Marines cope with the stress of separation.

Before departing MCAS Miramar, the president also joined Secretary of the Navy Gordon R. England in presenting the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force - South with the Presidential Unit Citation for their service in fighting the Taliban and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan during the initial phase of the Global War on Terror.

At Camp Pendleton he spent the day with Marines, thanking them in a prepared speech, having lunch with the troops at a mess hall and meeting with families of fallen or injured servicemembers.

Thousands of Marines represent-

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After externally lifting a damaged AH-1W Super Cobra from the Fallujah battlefield, a CH-53E with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 361, Marine Aircraft Group 16, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, prepares to drop the attack helicopter at Al Taqaddum, Iraq, Nov. 13. While providing close air support for Marines on the ground in Fallujah, the Cobra with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 169 was hit by a probable shoulder fired missile, forcing the crew to make an emergency landing. Photo courtesy of HMLA-169

## 'Snake pilots' help Marines on the ground

Story by Cpl. Paul Leicht

3rd MAW Combat Correspondent

AL ANBAR PROVINCE, Iraq - Marine AH-1W Super Cobra helicopter pilots inflicted major damage on terrorists in the larger unfolding drama of war-ravaged Fallujah.

Bonded by the sobering reality of combat, "snake pilots" with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 169, Marine Aircraft Group 16, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, shared an experience that illuminates a unique esprit de corps that

comes with "wings of gold."

Operating day and night as a detachment out of an austere airfield near Fallujah, Cobras with HMLA-169 flew close air support, casualty evacuation and convoy escorts, and armed reconnaissance missions, said Capt. William B. Fenwick, pilot, HMLA-169.

"What we do is all about supporting the Marines on the ground to make a difference so that their job is a little easier," said Fenwick who flew exclusively at night during the battle. "They did all the really hard work to liberate a city

infested with a determined and capable enemy."

HMLA-169's detachment went into the Fallujah inferno with eight pilots, four Cobras and 30 maintainers supporting 24-hour operations and emerged with an indelible impression.

"You remind yourself that you knew upon joining the Marine Corps that you expected to go in harm's way, that the stakes are high for all involved, that your training and experience to date have prepared you for the challenges ahead and that the best results come when you stick to that training," said 1st Lt. Shawn E. Anderson, front-seat pilot, HMLA-169, who was wounded by shrapnel during the battle.

"Whether maintainer or pilot, our squadron's success comes from Marines being Marines, and doing what they're trained to do with stamina and endurance, under less than perfect circum-

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## Inside

Weekend forecast from Miramar's weather station

75°/52°  
Today

72°/52°  
Saturday

70°/50°  
Sunday

Marines upgrade Humvees  
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# Alcoholics Anonymous provides support to problem drinkers

Story by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

“Why me? I ask that question to myself every time I take sip of alcohol. Why do I have a drinking problem?” said a recovering alcoholic at an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting. “Not only has my addiction hurt myself, it has hurt others around me. I lost my wife, my family’s trust and embarrassed my command. It’s controlling my life.”

This A.A. member has taken the first step to recovery by admitting that he was powerless over his addiction and that his life had become unmanageable.

According to the A.A. Web site, not all alcoholics have the same symptoms, but many show these signs: a feeling that alcohol can make them more at ease with other people, taking “just one more” at the end of a party, blacking out, drinking alone and drinking in the morning to relieve hangovers.

Problem drinkers have a place to go for free support here on station.

Anybody with access to the station can attend A.A. meetings every Monday from 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. at the Marine Corps Community Services center.

A.A. is a fellowship of men and women who have a drinking problem. Their primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics achieve sobriety. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership and the only requirement for joining is the desire to stop drinking.

During the meetings, A.A. members will introduce themselves by stating their names and admitting that they are alcoholics. Each attendee will then take turns

sharing their personal story, if they choose to. Other members will listen and offer advice throughout the meeting.

“These meetings provide a place where a person can get baggage off their chests. It is a sober network where you can meet friends to do sober activities with,” said an A.A. member. “Since we are all alcoholics, we understand what each other is going through because all of us can relate to one another. You have a higher chance of staying sober by attending these meetings.”

According to Charles P. Cooluris, Drug Demand Reduction coordinator, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, the first A.A. meeting was held in March 2004 to give servicemembers on restriction for alcohol policy violations an opportunity to attend the meetings and receive help for their addictions.

“After-care is a big step to recovery and these meetings will provide that for problem drinkers,” said Cooluris. “Some servicemembers are told to attend the meetings and others come on their own will. But, if you’re on restriction and your command won’t let you come here, we will talk to them for you so you can get the help you need.”

Experts agree alcoholism is an illness, but A.A. members can recover before the disease wrecks their health and lives.

“Alcoholism is like being in a ring against Mike Tyson. When I drink, I get my butt kicked every time,” said an A.A. member. “These meetings are helping me get out of that ring and on a path to a sober and healthy lifestyle.”

For more information on A.A. meetings, call 577-7285 or visit [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org).



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## MIRAMARKS

“What do the crossed rifles on the Marine Corps uniform mean to you?”



**STAFF SGT. JEROME STAPLES**  
Quality Assurance Evaluator  
H&HS

“Tradition. Every Marine is a rifleman. It represents a rifleman.”

**LANCE CPL. ANTHONY CERTA**  
Military Policeman  
H&HS

“Every Marine is a rifleman and we hold ourselves to a higher standard when it comes to dealing with any weapons system.”



**CPL. DANA CUSHING**  
Armory NCO  
MWHS-3

“That is the distinguishing feature, to me, that we are Marines. Nobody else has that.”



# The gun club: crossed rifles not always in the Corps

Story by Sgt. Kristen L. Tull

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

If you were a Marine Corps sergeant in 1958, your sleeve would have had “three stripes up,” but no crossed rifles. It wasn’t until 1959 that crossed rifles became a part of the Marine Corps uniform.

The crossed rifles are symbolic of the fact that all Marines are riflemen first.

The addition came about when the Marine Corps decided they were “top heavy.” There were too many Marines sitting at the master sergeant rank, which, at the time, was a pay grade of E-7. Therefore, the new E-8 rank was established with three stripes up, three rockers, and crossed rifles in the middle, which is still used today.

For master sergeants (E-7) to be selected for master

sergeant (E-8), they had to meet certain requirements.

First, they had to be nominated by their commanders. They had to have at least eight years of enlisted service with two years time in grade as an E-7, as well as possess the leadership skills needed in their military occupational specialty.

Initially, Headquarters Marine Corps allotted 75 openings for this position. Each of the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing’s groups nominated one Marine. Marine Wing Support Group 37 was allowed two nominations.

These candidates went through a battery of tests to be selected. If they were selected as a finalist, they had to then pass a written and oral test, as well as give an impromptu speech.

All nine candidates from Marine Corps Air Station El Toro were selected, and pinned on master sergeant (E-8) January 1, 1959.

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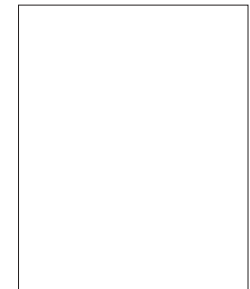
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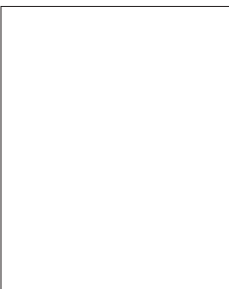
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## SNAKES

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stances,” Anderson said.

Putting the “close” in close air support, Anderson’s tandem-seat, twin-engine Cobra was hit by enemy fire over the city. With his rear-seat pilot seriously injured, he took his set of flight controls and landed the critically damaged helicopter safely on Fallujah’s peninsula.

A CH-53E Super Stallion with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 361, MAG-16, later externally lifted Anderson’s Cobra from the battlefield.

“He saved himself, his pilot and the aircraft,” recalled Maj. Glen G. Butler, executive officer, HMLA-169. “The other pilot in the Cobra was (medically evacuated) back to the States and is recovering with injuries, but he’ll be okay. Lieutenant Anderson did a fantastic job.”

Having the right combat mindset also helped other Cobra pilots get the job done over Fallujah.

“You really don’t think about all the bad things that accompany combat when you are engaged in it,” explained 1st Lt. D.P. McGuire, front-seat pilot, HMLA-169, who flew with the squadron’s leader during the battle.

“You do the job you were trained for and after the mission is complete, there is always plenty of time to reflect on what happened. You can never completely prepare yourself for what can happen out there. You just compartmentalize, complete the mission at hand and hope that your equipment and training bring you out alive...and a little luck can help as well.”

Knowledge of the threat, the ground combat scheme of maneuver, and proven tactics and procedures with a focused approach enabled the pilots to communicate and support squad-sized elements to battalion fire support plans, said Lt. Col. Lloyd A. Wright, commanding officer, HMLA-169.

“We were constantly getting updates from the forward air controllers on enemy activity and friendly movement within the city,” recalled McGuire. “There were numerous times that Marines were in close proximity to the enemy as we employed our weapons systems. I just hope that what we did made a difference and were able to knock a few doors down so that the enemy would pay with their lives and not our Marines.”

Firing precision-guided missiles, high-explosive rockets and thousands of 20mm machine-gun rounds into a variety of insurgent positions in Fallujah, the Marines of HMLA-169 painted a clear picture for the enemy.

“They will not win,” McGuire said confidently.

“Giving those Marines the support they need requires that we, as pilots, have a high degree of familiarity with the big picture operationally, as well as the smaller pictures of each individual unit,” said Anderson. “Before (Operation Al Fajr) started we spent a lot of time studying maps and imagery—familiarizing ourselves with terrain features, control measures, and key buildings and checkpoints. The more you know before taking off is directly related to how quickly, and how well, you can support the Marines on the ground.”

# New Humvee armor hits streets soon

Story by Maj. R. Crum

Marine Corps Systems Command

MARINE CORPS SYSTEMS COMMAND, Quantico, VA - With the fielding of the Marine Armor Kit to begin as early as January, Marines will soon have a universally applicable Humvee armor solution to help shield them from the effects of Improvised Explosive Devices and other ballistic battlefield dangers.

The MAK can be installed by operators or by contractors and is adaptable to both the 2-door and 4-door Humvee variants. According to Capt. Andrew Rodgers, Marine Corps Systems Command project officer, the MAK’s versatility is a distinct advantage over factory “up-armor” alternatives because it offers a high level of universal protection to the existing Humvee fleet.

“The kits are made of a combination of rolled homogenous armor, high hard steel, mild steel and ballistic glass,” said Rodgers. Components include reinforced doors with ballistic glass, flank protection kits, gunner shield kits and an air conditioning system.

Until now, Marines have ingeniously blended commercial off-the-shelf items and field expedient measures

to achieve a comparatively high level of interim protection utilizing ballistic blankets, commercial off-the-shelf panels and doors, and ballistic glass. Follow-on efforts, coordinated with Marine Corps Logistics Command, produced “zonal armor” protection on doors, flanks, tailgates, and underbody. However, the requirement remained for a uniform solution to the basic need for Humvee protection.

An evolutionary process, MAK development started as a collaborative effort with the U.S. Army, but culminated with a uniquely Ma-



Pictured is the 4-door Humvee equipped with the Marine Armor Kit. The MAK is also compatible with the 2-door Humvee models. Scheduled for fielding as early as January, the MAK will provide Marines a universally applicable solution to operational Humvee armor demands. *Official Marine Corps photo*

rine product developed by MCSC and MCLC. Designers of the MAK capitalized on the experience gained from operators in the field and from lessons learned through several rounds of ballistics testing at the U.S. Army Aberdeen Test Center in Maryland.

Though the development stage proved to be challenging and demanding, the real daunting task will be the installation

and fielding of the MAK to support Marine forces in a deployed combat environment.

Project officers, design engineers and logisticians wrestle with numerous variables to develop reasonable solutions to fulfill specific requirements.

According to Maj. James Washburn, a MCSC project officer who has also worked on the program, “It’s a huge task to match armor protection against the evolving threats while staying within the carrying capacity of the wheeled vehicle fleet. You simply can’t retro-

fit a Humvee to match the armor protection of a main battle tank,” said Washburn. “Our main objective is to make sure that Marines get the best protection possible in the time frame that they need it.”

Rogers noted, “Obviously the specifics are classified, but the MAK is designed to protect Marines from the prevalent threat of IED attacks and other ballistic dangers.”

Marine Corps Logistics Command has the production capacity and capability to manufacture the MAK. This means that Marines will be receiving this product from an in-house provider. Coming in at approximately \$34,000 fully installed, the MAK is as cost-effective as it is capable.

With an initial order of several thousand kits, eventually every Humvee in a combat environment will be equipped with the MAK. Production will continue through the spring of 2005 and additional kits can be produced as needed.

The kit is modular, and can provide a minimum level of protection at an additional 1,800 pounds, or full protection at around 3,400 pounds. It is estimated that installation and fielding to the deployed operational forces will take about 12 to 18 months.



# Advisory board unveils facility improvements

Story by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

The air station is known for being “a city within a city.” From compact discs and groceries to video rentals and auto services, station personnel have many things easily accessible to them.

Miramar personnel had an opportunity to find out the latest improvements to these facilities at the Miramar Exchange and Commissary Advisory Board meeting here Nov. 18.

Gary M. Walls, director, Marine Corps Exchange, discussed the new construction plan for the exchange, scheduled for the summer of 2005.

According to Walls, the renovated exchange will have an additional 40,000 square feet added to the garden shop, new traffic aisles and an overall better facility.

In addition, the exchange will carry more merchandise.

We only have so much space, so we can’t have a Home Depot in our small hardware section,” said Walls. “We are open to any suggestions of merchandise that we should carry. We can’t please everybody, but we can try our best.”

The exchange will also match the price on any merchandise that is cheaper off base.

“People should take advantage of these savings,” said Cpl. Marco Fiallo, maintenance administrator, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11, Marine Aircraft Group 11, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing. “You don’t have to drive off the station to pick up something you can find at the exchange. You can get the same price here and you won’t have to pay tax.”

The Auto Services Shop also price-matches car parts, as



**Improvements for the commissary, like self-checkout stands were discussed at the Miramar Exchange and Commissary Advisory Board meeting Nov. 18. Photo by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones.**

long as they are not from a dealership or special ordered.

The commissary, on the other hand, does not match prices or take coupons from local supermarkets. It does, however, accept manufacturer, military and Internet coupons. Shoppers can go to [www.commissaries.com](http://www.commissaries.com) for printable coupons.

According to Bob Nagle, commissary store director, the commissary also wants to ensure its customers are happy.

“If you bought a steak from us and you weren’t satisfied, we will either give you a new steak or refund your money,” said Nagle. “We want to ensure that our customers are satisfied with our products.”

Nagle also discussed the possibility of having a commissary support staff to assist shoppers with everything from reaching groceries to ensuring they get to the fastest checkout lines.

## Ribbon cutting reopens transient quarters

Story compiled by CPAO

MCAS Miramar

In keeping with continuing accolades highlighted by the Commander In Chief Installation Excellence Award received in 2003, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar reopened Building 4325 of the Consolidated Bachelor Quarters Nov. 30, after more than a year of renovation.

Delayed by the building’s use as temporary lodging for personnel evacuated from family housing units aboard the air station during the San Diego wildfires of November 2003, the remodeling project performed by contractor Soltek Pacific took more than one year to reach fruition.

Shearing the symbolic ribbon in unison during the ceremony were Brig. Gen. Carl B. Jensen, commanding general, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Col. Ray Adamiec, assistant chief of staff G-4, MCAS Miramar, and Jimmy Summers., senior vice president, Soltek Pacific.

According to Adamiec, the completion of the refurbished structure was the culmination of the intense efforts and teamwork of everyone involved with the project.

“I can’t say enough about the hard work put in by everyone from the building contractors to the construction project management and CBQ billeting staff,” he remarked.” A lot of coordination went on behind the scenes to make this project a success.”

Featuring totally revamped interiors, the CBQ boasts a number of noticeable improvements, including new plumbing, electrical systems, more spacious accommodations, and wheelchair access, mentioned Ford V. Jocson, director, CBQ.

“The (CBQ) rooms were private rooms with shared baths constructed in 1956 and the renovation transformed the rooms into suites with separate bedrooms and living rooms,” he noted.

Ultimately, the renovated facility serves as another sparkling addition to an already highly regarded military installation, said Adamiec.

## POTUS

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ing nearly every command on Camp Pendleton greeted the president with a round of “ooh-rahs.” Bush, wearing a tanker jacket with a United States Marine Corps emblem on the right side and “Commander In Chief” stitched on the left, thanked U.S. forces for making the sacrifices needed to make America safer.

“In the war on terror, you have fought ... freedom’s enemies from the caves and mountains of Afghanistan to the deserts and cities of Iraq,” Bush said of the Marines of 1st Marine Expeditionary Force. “Marines of Camp Pendleton’s 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit were the first conventional forces to fight in Operation Enduring Freedom. They deployed hundreds of miles into a landlocked country to help seize the Kandahar Airport, hunted down the Taliban and al Qaeda fighters, and helped to liberate more than 28 million people from one of the world’s most brutal regimes.”

Bush said he expects the work by Marines to pay off. He pointed to Iraq’s anticipated Jan. 30 election date, but warned, “We can expect further violence... The terrorists will do all they can to delay and disrupt free elections in Iraq. And they will fail.”

Bush promised, as he has repeatedly over recent days, the elections “will proceed as planned.

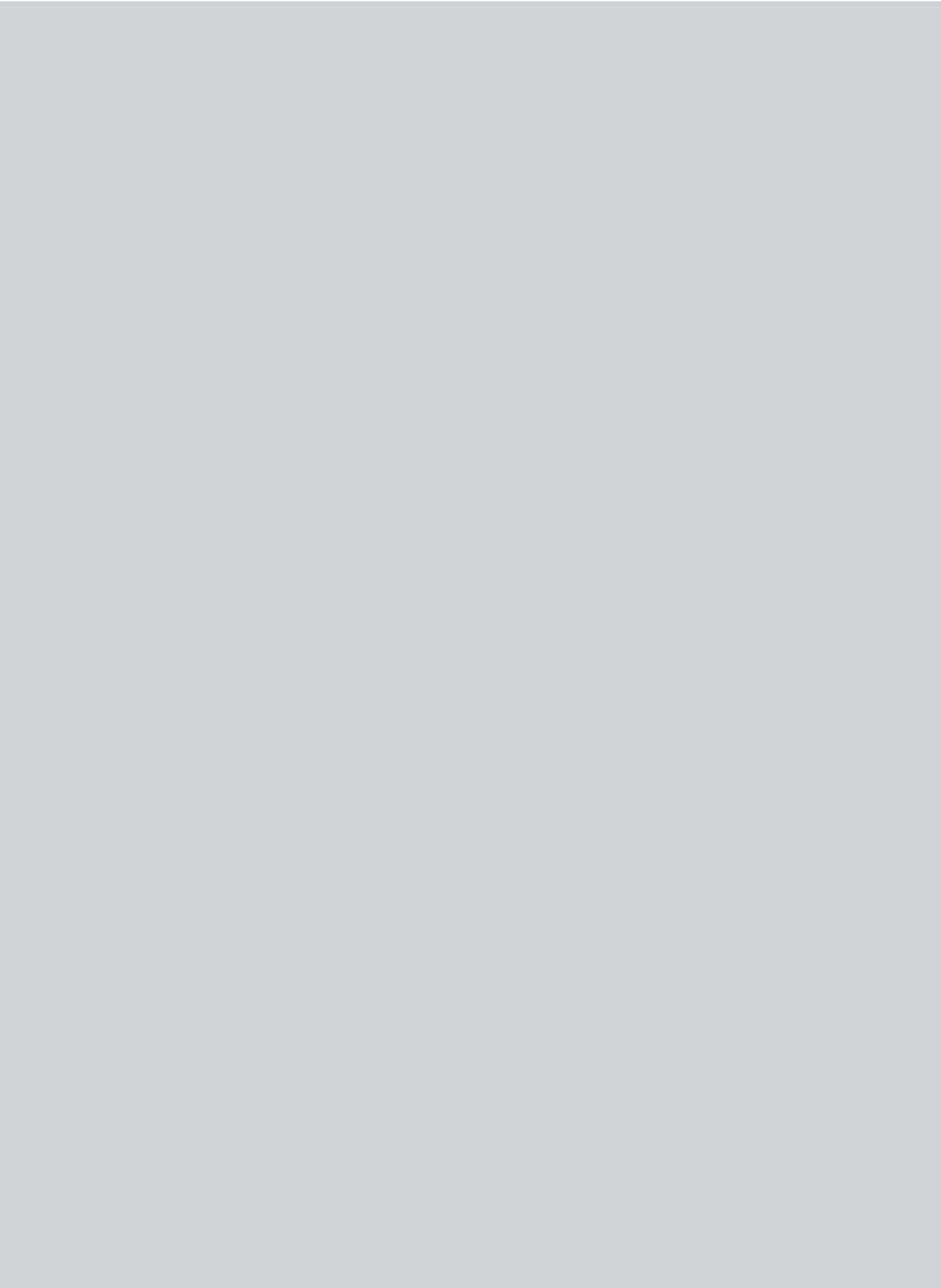
“You see, the terrorists understand what is at stake,” the president said. “They know they have no future in a free Iraq.

“They know democracy will give Ira-



**President George W. Bush, (center) walks with Brig. Gen. Carl B. Jensen, commander, Marine Corps Air Bases Western Area (right) and Secretary of the Navy Gordon R. England, during the president’s stop at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., Dec. 7. The president was en route to Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., for a speech and lunch with Marines and Sailors from the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force. Photo by Sgt. J.L. Zimmer III**

qis a stake in the future of their country,” Bush continued in his comments about Marines’ enemies in Iraq. “When Iraqis choose their leader in free elections, it will destroy the myth that the terrorists are fighting a foreign occupation and make clear that what the terrorists really are fighting is the will of the Iraqi people.”





Marines from Company L, 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, sift through narcotics found in a house in Fallujah, Iraq, Nov. 10. The cache was destroyed after its discovery. *Photo by Sgt. Nathan K. LaForte*

# Lima Company fights Fallujah’s mean streets

Story by Sgt. Nathan K. LaForte

3rd MAW Combat Correspondent

FALLUJAH, Iraq - Marines of Company L, 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, fought their way through terrorists, insurgents and foreign fighters in Fallujah, Iraq, for two weeks during Operation

Al Fajr.

This company of the “Thundering Third,” who usually finds itself traveling in Marine Assault Amphibian Vehicles, moved throughout the city with only one platoon in AAVs. The rest of Company L moved throughout the city in Humvees, but moved mostly in dismounted patrols.

The Marines started their journey Nov. 8, when they were tasked to help seize their first objective of the operation, said Capt. Brian G. Heatherman, company commander, Company L.

“The company got the mission of seizing the train station (north of the city), which at that point was the battalion’s main effort,” Heatherman said. “Taking the train station allowed (combat) engineers to breach the train tracks which let the Army (2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment) to do the initial push to the northern part of Fallujah. Once the 2/7 Cavalry gained a foothold into the city, 3/1 moved in behind them, doing a detailed sweep through the town.”

After the initial push past the train station, the battalion, along with 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, was tasked with clearing out the Jolan district of the city, which was said to house many die-hard terrorist factions, noted Heatherman.

After two days of fighting, it was apparent why it was thought that the enemy fighters would be tough to tackle, he added.

“For the initial push through the Jolan area, we found several caches,” Heatherman continued. “They included not only ordnance, such as (rocket-propelled grenades), mortars, rockets and heavy machine guns, but also about 300 bottles of adrenaline, hypodermic needles, crack cocaine and other stuff.”

“Basically, these guys are getting all hopped up (on drugs) to make them vicious fighters,” Heatherman said. “They are certainly not as vicious as our Marines because they are just not making it, but they’re doing whatever they can to give them confidence to fight us.”

Though Company L achieved their objective of pushing south a few kilometers then west toward the Euphrates River before the two-day mark, all the fighting



Sgt. Nathan J. Sauer, a squad leader with Company L, 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, detains fighting-age Iraqi males in Fallujah, Iraq, Nov. 10. The detainees were taken to a house with weapons south of the Jolan district of the city. *Photo by Sgt. Nathan K. LaForte*

had not been without incident, Heatherman said.

“The enemy’s tactics were to wait and let the heavy tanks bypass their positions while holding in small pockets,” he mentioned. “We ended up losing four Marines in one day to little pockets of resistance, but we ended up killing these guys through the use of rockets and





lion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, watches as other Iraq, Nov. 17. The Marines from Company L found the males in a by Sgt. Nathan K. LaForte

satchel charges. We’d bring the house down on them or whatever was necessary.”

After reaching the Euphrates, Company L repositioned with the rest of the battalion to continue pushing south. They first seized the high ground in the form of two five-story buildings, which gave the unit the full advantage of

sight, Heatherman explained.

“The commanding view of the battlefield was just incredible,” he said. “The buildings where we saw enemy, we had our (Shoulder-launched Multipurpose Assault Weapon) gunners get on top of the buildings and lob rounds into those buildings and took them down.”

While continuing the battle during the day, Company L made a significant find amidst the multitudes of houses cramping the city streets.

“As the day went on, the Marines were attacking and checking suspicious buildings out,” Heatherman described. “We discovered several caches in one building, with computers and printing machines with Mujahideen anti-American rhetoric. It turned out to be a Mujahideen headquarters.”

The building and its contents gave the Marines an inside look at their enemy.

“That building had a lot of scary things,” he said. “The torture chamber at the bottom with bloody handprints on the walls, which really spoke volumes about the kind of people we’re fighting. I’d say they’re brutal, but yet they’re cowards. There is nothing about them that’s brave, these guys are just bullies. They persecute the weak.”

After heavy fighting throughout the day, Company L held their position and conducted a more in-depth search of its current location, which proved to be a good decision, Heatherman said.

“The next day we hung out for a day and decided to (re-check some bypassed houses),” he said “We decided not to stay static and that day we ended up running into more Mujahideen and killing them. It’s real easy for these guys to get in our backyard and back clearing has been very effective. If we don’t get them today, we’re going to get them eventually.”

The next day, the company started dealing with an entirely new situation.

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**“They are showing compassion. You’ve got these displaced civilians, especially the families, women and children. Marines are bringing them food and making sure they are taken care of. I’m really proud of my boys.”**

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**Capt. Brian G. Heatherman,**  
**Company L commander**

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“While we were in that static position, we heard 3/5 playing their (message to insurgents to surrender) using their (psychological operations) unit, and we had a whole new problem,” he said while explaining the advantage of having the Iraqi National Guardsmen working with them.

“We had to deal with a lot of displaced civilians. In addition to the fighting, handling civilians is where the ING has really been a combat multiplier for us.”

“They can tell if these guys are Fallujans or foreign fighters, or guys that are trying to give up and claiming they have just been hanging out in their homes, when in fact they were fighting,” Heatherman said. “It worked well for us. We ended up dealing with well over 200-250 displaced civilians over the course of two days.”

After dealing with the displaced civilians, it was back to fighting for the Marines.

“In the next few days, there was some hard fighting. We found some good pockets of resistance those days,” Heatherman said. “Having the combined arms effect has been supporting the Marines well. One team, one fight here, and everybody has his own job. It’s unfortunate that we have (medical evacuations), but when we do, we’re getting these Marines back and patched up quickly.”

Company L and the rest of 3/1 are currently conducting “mop up” operations in Fallujah where they continue to counter the terrorist threat in the region.

“The Marines have been doing awesome and I think that they are getting into what they’re doing,” Heatherman said. “In addition to that, they are showing compassion. You’ve got these displaced civilians, especially the families, women and children. Marines are bringing them food and making sure they are taken care of. I’m really proud of my boys.”



# Dental clinic helps fight gum disease, tooth decay

Story by Pfc. James B. Hoke

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

From brown teeth with black spots to deformed and twisted gums, the world is full of people who have poor dental hygiene. Instead of taking care of the problem before it starts, many people wait until it gets too bad to fix.

However, there are those that can help put foul mouths back on track to health.

The Miramar Branch Dental Clinic offers dental treatment and education to help servicemembers develop better dental hygiene methods.

“The biggest thing is education,” said Senior Chief Petty Officer Carl T. Fritts, senior enlisted leader, Miramar Branch Dental Clinic. “Every time (servicemembers) come to the dentist we show them how to properly brush and floss.”

By showing servicemembers the correct way to take care of their teeth, the dental clinic helps decrease their chances of gum disease and tooth decay.

“It is like (not) washing your hands, which is how a lot of people get the common cold,” Fritts added. “The more you (brush), the less likely you are to (have problems).”

However, to make sure servicemembers are practicing the lessons they learn at the clinic, they have an annual checkup.

“We mainly treat active duty

servicemembers,” said Fritts. “Every year Marines and Sailors have to get a required checkup (and) that is when we (know) the treatment that needs to be done.”

However, some servicemembers can catch dental diseases between checkups and not know it.

“Most diseases depend on circumstances,” Fritts said. “Some diseases can be hereditary, like gum disease. The more common diseases are tooth decay and gingivitis.

“Gingivitis is minor swelling of the gums caused by food particles that (remain in the mouth),” he added. “Almost everyone has it.”

Although servicemembers can inherit a few of these diseases, use of certain substances can increase their chances of contracting these diseases such as mouth cancer.

“Tobacco products can cause cancerous lesions on the lips, gums and throat,” said Fritts. “Some people think because they smoke and don’t use chewing tobacco, it can’t happen to them, but smokers get it too.”

However, most gum disease and cavities are caused from bacteria that everyone has.

“Bacteria is in everybody’s mouth,” said Cmdr. E. B. Dembinski, director, Miramar Branch Dental Clinic. “It gives

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Cpl. Matthew Jacobsen, radio technician, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, installs a fuse on a voice coordination board Nov. 29. Photo by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

## Maintenance Marines maintain communication

Story by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

They can be found behind the scenes operating the sound systems at retirement ceremonies, change of commands and safety briefs.

If a microphone or speaker breaks, it is up to these Marines to fix the problem. However, the Marines from the Ground Maintenance Electronic Repair section do much more than provide the station’s events with sound.

These ground maintenance electronic repair Marines are responsible for all the ground communication on Miramar, which includes the Miramar Fire Department, Branch Medical Clinic and Provost Marshal’s Office.

The section’s five Marines ensure that these first responders, in addition to other units, always have working radios, 24 hours a day and seven days a week.

According to Cpl. Matthew Jacobsen, ground maintenance electronic repairman, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, when the network is down and communication is lost, it takes approximately 16 minutes for his shop to switch to the emergency network.

“There is always one of us on call when

we’re not working in case any one of these radios breaks down,” said Jacobsen. “If the Marine on duty can’t fix the problem, we’ll all come in to help out.”

According to Staff Sgt. Ramone Lipscomb, electronic maintenance chief, H&HS, his Marines repair and maintain 578 hand-held mobile radios on Miramar.

“I had to figure out how to fix and reprogram these radios when I got here,” said Jacobsen. “I didn’t see this specific equipment in my (military occupational specialty) school. We learn most of our skills on the job.”

In addition to repairing radios and operating sound systems, Jacobsen and the other Marines in the section also maintain the public announcement and station colors systems, as well as installing vehicle communication systems and preventing and responding to any other communication breakdowns on station.

“There is nothing I haven’t seen that these Marines couldn’t fix,” said Lipscomb. “I know I can rely on these Marines to do their job.”

“A lot of people see us at retirement ceremonies and think that’s all we do,” said Cpl. Jose Lucio, ground maintenance electronic repairman, H&HS. “We’re not just the sound system guys—we do a lot more.”





**Pumba, a French bulldog, discovers he is at a healthy weight on a scale during a routine veterinary exam at the Miramar Veterinary Clinic Nov. 22. Photo by Sgt. Cecilia Sequeira**

# Veterinary facility promotes pet welfare

Story by Sgt. Cecilia Sequeira

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Man’s best furry friends are found scurrying in and out of Miramar’s clinic every hour of every workday, but the clinic’s busy schedule does not necessarily reflect owners’ doing the best for their pet’s well being.

Among station pet owners, it is well known that active duty and retired servicemembers and their adult family members can use the station clinic without paying for an exam. Many services at the clinic are free or cheaper than those at off-station clinics, often making this clinic more popular to military users.

However, this often results in long waits for pets.

“Our biggest problem is people waiting

for cheaper service and putting their pets in danger. Don’t wait on medical conditions to be seen,” said Cammeo V. Martin-Wylie, veterinary technician, Veterinary Clinic, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar.

“We are definitely a lot cheaper, but at the same time we are not full service. We do not recommend people hold out to see us instead of seeing another clinic if it is an emergency. We are really limited on appointments.”

Martin-Wylie says the clinic will take action to prevent customers from waiting two weeks on an appointment during a pet emergency.

“If something is a bad enough case, we can refuse an appointment. If we feel it is life threatening or too severe, we will refuse to book an appointment,” she said.

For pet owners in doubt of the severity

of a case, the line of action is clear. “Describe the symptoms to the receptionist and go with the advice given on whether or not to get seen or wait,” said Martin-Wylie.

For the clinic, it isn’t just a matter of a large influx of daily patients but simply of capacity. Even if the veterinary clinic were not busy, it still would not be equipped for emergencies.

However, there are a number of services the station veterinarians can offer at a lower price than most off-station clinics. The HomeAgain microchip, a computer pet identification system, is growing in popularity.

For some, this permanent locator chip is not just a luxury but an absolute neces-

See PETS page 10





## Miramar Movies

The Station Auditorium is located in building 2242, and will be featuring the following movies free of charge. Outside food and drinks are not permitted. For more information, contact 577-4143 or log on to [www.mccsmiramar.com](http://www.mccsmiramar.com).

**Friday:**

4:30 p.m. Team America: World Police (R)  
6:30 p.m. Alfie (R)  
8:30 p.m. Taxi (PG-13)

**Saturday:**

6:30 p.m. The Grudge (PG-13)  
8:30 p.m. Surviving Christmas (PG-13)

**Sunday:**

1 p.m. Raise Your Voice (PG)  
6:30 p.m. Friday Night Lights (PG-13)

**Wednesday:**

6:30 p.m. Ray (PG-13)

**Thursday:**

2 p.m. The Incredibles (PG)  
6:30 p.m. Alfie (R)

Presentations and time subject to change.

## Commissary offers college scholarships

The fifth year of Scholarships for Military Children is now underway. Applications, including and essay on how the heightened awareness of terrorism has impacted the student’s life, are due at the commissary Feb. 15. The program is open to umarried children of military personnel. Log on to [www.militaryscholar.org](http://www.militaryscholar.org).

## Religious Services

The Chaplain’s Office is located in building 5632 and coordinates regularly-scheduled worship services. For the location and meeting schedules of religious activities, contact the Chaplain’s Office at 577-1333.

**Sunday:**

9:30 a.m. Protestant worship service  
11 a.m. Roman Catholic Eucharist

**Wednesday:**

7 p.m. Baptist service

**Monday-Friday:**

11:30 a.m. Roman Catholic daily mass

**Jewish:**

7 p.m. First Friday of the month MCRD  
7:30 p.m. Last Friday at Edson Range Chapel

## Briefs

### Holiday Post Office hours

The Miramar Post Office will be open on Dec. 24 from 9 a.m. through 10 p.m. for parcel pickup only.

### Buick Invitational

The Century Club of San Diego is inviting all active duty military and family members to the Buick Invitational Golf Tournament at Torrey Pines Golf Course, Jan. 17-23. For more information, call (858)281-4653.

### Football bash drawing

A happy hour and drawing open to all hands will kick off today at 4 p.m. at the Enlisted clubs. Prizes include a chance to win a trip for two to Super Bowl XXXIX, gift certificates and more.

### Winter Camp 2004

Marine Corps Community Services will sponsor a winter activity camp for children Dec. 20 through Jan. 17. The camp will feature arts and crafts, field trips, sports and games, and more. All paperwork must be completed before children can be registered. For more information, call (858)577-4163.

### Counter intelligence

CI/HUMINT Company seeks savvy, independent sergeants and corporals for the 0211 counterintelligence/human intelligence MOS. Candidates must be male, qualify for a top-secret security clearance, be a U.S. citizen, and have a GCT score of 110. For more information, call (760) 725-6870/6227.

## Impounded Vehicles

The following vehicles have been impounded and need to be claimed by the owners. Towing fees average \$113, storage fees \$28 daily. For more information contact the Provost Marshal’s Office at 577-1461.

Vehicle:	License:	Vehicle:	License:
Unk. Mitsubishi Gallant	NC/MXC3930	1976 Oldsmobile Deltase	CA/1KOJ720
Unk. Chevy Lumina	AZ/1ERA01	1994 Lincoln Town Car	CA/5GLW328
Unk. Honda Shadow	No Plates No VIN	Unk. Jeep	WI/CP238T
1996 Toyota Camry	CA/4XXZ303	Unk. Trailer	CA/EJ2073
Black Traylor	No Plates No VIN	1995 Geo Metro	CA/5CEV409
1994 Chevy 1500 Pickup	CA/6L03025	1988 Chevy Blazer	MO/ 627YCE

